many English writers to dwell disproportionately, as it seems, upon childish experiences, and especially to write in a somewhat ambiguous vein about schooldays, is here evident enough. There is something almost dutiful in the manner in which most British novelists relate schoolboy stupidities and conscientiously testify to the schoolboy loathing for head-masters. One cannot altogether acquit Mr. Mackenzie, moreover, of the charge of treating manifestations of immaturity with what at times seems undeserved solemnity, at times incongruous humor. All this from the American point of view, which doubtless, in the estimate of a British novel should not take precedence altogether of the British point of view!

But apart from all this, the story has one extraordinary merit. It combines with an attitude of sympathy and even of devoutness a shrewdly realistic and critical spirit, an ability to see all sides of a complicated question, a subtlety that distinguishes in just the right way between church and faith, between personality and conviction. No other book that one knows of maintains so effectively what one may call, without intentional irreverence, the glamour of religion, while it analyzes religious manifestations and clerical organizations with the acuteness of a skeptic and with an astringent but unscoffing humor such as few skeptics can command. One does not really know whether the author's viewpoint is scientific or religious, evangelical or the reverse. And one does not really want to know. Mr. Mackenzie has successfully suppressed any too definite expression of his own personality. His attitude is humane and historical.

The novel is not powerful, its slight drama being weak and thin, and turning largely upon the breaking up of a love match through a conflict between extreme religiosity and a kind of madness of denial (not certainly any more sane), with a grotesque death by accident at the end of this melodramatic episode. But the novel is irresistibly fascinating. One becomes discontented, resolves to read no more of it, but does read it to the end.

THE RUSSIAN TURMOIL. By General A. I. Denikin. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company.

So far as the general causes and conditions of the Russian Revolution are concerned, the reader of General Denikin's book will get little light: the Russian Turmoil remains a turmoil indeed. Obviously, to be a Russian and to be in the midst of events is not enough to enable one to understand this vast confusion. The author seems to be as much puzzled as an outsider might be at the collapse of Russian patriotism, at the débâcle of Russian religiosity—previously devout peasants becoming capable of the vilest sacrilege. Political motives—if there were any—are not made to appear rational. Despair and caprice seem to reign everywhere. A Russian commander on one of the fighting fronts, having been requested, in common with others, to send to the Stavka his opinion as to what had best be done, telegraphed in all serious-

ness that he believed that Russia was divinely predestined to perish; one had better make the sign of the cross and resign himself to the inevitable. The characters of the persons who figure in General Denikin's narrative are, with a few exceptions, about as understandable as the creatures of a dream. Who or what was Kerensky? He is no more intelligible than the Akhoond of Swat or the "Bong with the Luminous Nose". Statesman or charlatan, martyr or coward, he has been variously described, and still to Western eyes he appears an enigma.

There are, to be sure, certain outstanding facts which may be taken as explaining some of the broad features of the convulsion. The army, General Denikin tells us, was not, at the beginning of the revolution, on the verge of collapse. It had grave shortcomings, indeed, but its utter disintegration was the work of the Revolutionaries themselves. The "freest army in the world" was so cowardly and insubordinate that its officers longed to die. Yet this demoralization was not due to any racial degeneracy. Through nearly three years of struggle the old Russian army had endured greater suffering than any other forces in the war. Russia lost two and one half million in killed, Germany two million, the other nations individually much less. The breakdown was mental and political.

The Provisional Government could not control the situation, in the first place because it had delivered itself into the hands of the Soviet, the power of which institution it sadly underestimated, and, in the second place, because the masses were incapable of following the watchwords of the Revolutionary Democrats. The people were easily worked up to momentary enthusiasm, easily flattered, quickly stirred to a kind of sentimentalism; it is this characteristic that foreigners and even Russians themselves have mistakenly referred to as the great, generous, incalculable soul of Russia, out of which a new order was to come. But in the main the Russian laborer, peasant, or soldier, was ignorant and utterly materialistic and selfish. He listened to Kerensky's harangues, applauded, and then began to grumble as soon as anything was required of him.

Furthermore, the Soviet, which wielded the real power, was absurdly unrepresentative. General Denikin gives a table showing the political composition of the All-Russian Congress of Representatives of the Soviets convened in June, 1917. There is a group corresponding to every shade of Socialist opinion; but "the overwhelming masses of Non-Socialist Russia were not represented at all". Racially the representation appears to have been no more satisfactory. The first Presidium of the All-Russian Central Committee of the Soviets contained one Georgian, five Jews, one Armenian, one Pole, and one Russian, "if his name was not an assumed one." This minority did not rule; it merely strove to introduce anarchy—especially into the army.

All this is meagre enough. Plainly, there is much that General Denikin—a soldier, not a politician, and often at the front—did not and could not know.

What his book is, mainly, is a striking picture of the most tremendous and widespread disintegration of morale that the world has ever seen. In its pages, well documented, filled with facts and poignant instances, and livid with the rhetoric of horror and despair, one sees the progress of a frightful disease affecting millions of men and reducing a once mighty organism to a corrupt mass.

"There was no Mother Country. The leader had been crucified. In his stead a group appeared at the Front of five Defensists and three Bolsheviks, and made an appeal to the Army:

" 'Forward, to battle for liberty and for the Revolution, but . . . without inflicting a decisive defeat upon the enemy!' cried the former.

" 'Down with the War and all power to the Proletariat!' shouted the others.

"The Army listened and listened, but would not move. And then . . . it dispersed!"

Set in a somewhat loose framework of political and military history, the real story, then, is that of the "democratization" of the Russian Army and of the demoralization of all Russia—the flower of its manhood was at the front—through propaganda, intrigue, and the manipulation of the press. How thorough-going was the process is evidenced by many striking episodes—the anarchy that broke out among the conservative Cossacks when their units returned from the front, the desperate attempt to reorganize the Army on racial lines, an attempt that laid the foundation of political separatism.

The significance of all this is not hard to see. If the average Russian, in his ignorance and political inexperience, in his materialism and his instinct for self-preservation (born of age-long oppression) could not see the need of discipline in the army, what could he know of political control? Here we have a most impressive phenomenon—a nation in arms fatuous enough to tolerate the idea of an army without effective discipline.

"There is a certain limit," writes General Denikin, "beyond which even baseness ceases to be simple baseness and becomes insanity." This is perhaps the most revealing comment in the whole book. Certainly in this idea of a baseness that becomes insanity, of an insanity that is indistinguishable from baseness, there is much philosophy.